



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
UNITED STATES ARMY FINANCE COMMAND
INDIANAPOLIS IN 46249-3000

SSFM-FC-ZA

24 December 2008

MEMORANDUM THRU Commander, U.S. Army Finance Command, 8899 East 56th Street,
Indianapolis, IN 46249-3000

FOR Commander, 5th Armor Brigade, Camp McGregor, Fort Bliss, TX

SUBJECT: Detachment 4 368th Financial Management Company (FMCO) Certification
Exercise (CERTEX) Report

1. Background: USAFINCOM Operational Support Team (OST) conducted a CERTEX with
Det 4 368th Financial Management (FM) Company from 17-21 DEC 08.

2. Purpose: To provide an assessment of the unit's technical abilities in conjunction with the
Financial Management Combined Arms Training Strategies. Units are rated in their overall
performance of a task. They earn ratings of T - Trained, P - Needs Practice, or U - Untrained

TASK	RATING
Perform Disbursing Operations (14-2-8002)	P
Conduct transactions with Agent Officers (14-2-8005)	P
Conduct Commercial Vendor Operations (14-2-8003)	P
Determine Entitlements to Pay and Allowances (805A-FSC-8103)	P
Overall Assessment	P

A. Perform Disbursing Operations (14-2-8002): P

Subtasks:

- Obtain Funds for Disbursing Purposes (805A-44A-6112) P
- Enter Cashier Transactions (805A-444C-1454) P
- Process a Loss of Funds (805A-44C-4103) P
- Prepare the Daily Statement Accountability (805A-DOP-8105) P

(1) Observations: The disbursing cell performed exceedingly well throughout the 5 day
certification exercise (CERTEX) held at Camp McGregor, Fort Bliss Texas from 17-21

December 2008. Soldiers within the section demonstrated a sound understanding and judgment of disbursing operations. All cashiers within the section balanced out each night and both DA's (1LT Wolski and SSG Woodson) made a concerted effort to ensure their cell was focusing on their mission by asking questions to the OST OC's and sharing information within the disbursing cell throughout the exercise. From the onset, it was evident that the disbursing cell was well prepared and had done prior preparation for the exercise. DA/Cashier orders as well as policies and SOP's were readily available for use throughout the exercise. While serving as NCOIC of disbursing, SSG Woodson continually oversaw the day to day operations within her cell. She was always readily available to answer questions and assist her cashiers whenever issues arose. In that same manner, 1LT Wolski ensure success within his cell by establishing a right seat/left seat operation for his cahiers within his section, properly advancing his cashier without error and to standard, briefing and counseling his Soldiers on the "safeguarding of public funds", and establishing and maintaining excellent lines of communication. A few minor issues observed were: a lack of thorough knowledge of disbursing policies and SOP's of which one led to a payment of more than \$200.00 U.S. cash without DA approval, and FMST cashier kit still needing improvement. Each of these issues was addressed with unit leadership and should be corrected/improved upon/prior to completing the RIPTOA process. Overall the disbursing section demonstrated their ability to perform to standard and should continue to improve with due time.

Other observations include:

- Communication up and down the disbursing chain of command was on point.
- SOP's and polices were available and constantly referenced throughout the exercise.
- NCO's in the section continually seemed proactive in their approach to handling issues.
- Cashiers were well prepared and continually engaged with their customers ensuring excellent customer service.

(2) Concerns: No major concerns to note in the disbursing cell. As DA, 1LT Wolski should continue seeking ways of improving his cell. SSG Woodson as NCOIC should continue preparing to undertake the position of DA if the need arises. With much more focus being put on the overall mission in Afghanistan, Detachment leadership must be prepared to make adjustments within their disbursing cell. Perhaps running two DA's, one for Paying Agents and the other for basic day to day operations is an option. Additionally, detachment leadership should continue to prepare each Soldier within the disbursing cell for their upcoming mission. Overconfidence due to their good performance is perhaps the biggest concern within the disbursing section.

(3) Recommendations: Cashiers and DA's should continue reviewing recent changes to theater specific disbursing policies and procedures. The DA's should continue training on DDS and other disbursing related software thus becoming subject matter experts in their respective jobs. With previous DDO experience, SFC Ngyuen should initially be heavily involved with the Disbursing operation. Utilizing all experienced Soldiers to train those with less experience is highly recommended. Overall, the section must utilize all resources available to improve it's readiness to serve all Soldiers within their area of responsibility.

(4) Overall Assessment: P

B. Conduct Transactions with Agent Officers (14-2-8005): P

Subtasks:

- Conduct Paying Agent Operations (805A-44A-7116) P
- Safeguard Public Funds (805A-44C-4102) P
- Prepare a Statement of Agent Officers Accountability (DD Form 1081) (805A-DOP-8102) P

(1) Observations: 1LT Wolski while serving in the capacity of DA completed all transactions with agent officer to include the proper briefing, funding, and verification of all agent officers throughout the exercise. Additionally, SSG Woodson demonstrated a good understanding of agent officer transactions. Both DA's worked well with their subordinated while demonstrating good judgment and knowledge of their subject matter. While funding several agent officers, 1LT Wolski constantly demonstrated attention to detail, high regard, and a desire to always give the customer as much information about the subject matter in which he/she was transacting. He should continue improving upon his paying agent brief as well as his overall understanding of agent officer operations. While giving his paying agent brief, 1LT Wolski appeared a bit unsure of himself at times, which should be improved by continual rehearsal and preparation.

(2) Concerns: Overconfidence as well and complacency due to a good performance in the CERTEX could result in a potential error and perhaps a loss of funds. Understanding the intricacies of Agent Officer Transactions and how it ties in to the overall concept of disbursing operations is imperative for success.

(3) Recommendations: With a heavy paying agent mission at their location, detachment leadership must continue to monitor the OPTEMPO of the disbursing cell and if need be, appoint a second DA to handle all agent officers transactions. The DA/NCOIC should review Paying Agent activities to gain a better understanding of the Paying Agent operations and continue to improve in his/her performance. Continue developing a plan to fund Paying Agents that will alleviate distractions and enable the "funding" operations to continue to progress. Be more proactive when setting appointments by gathering all necessary documents well in advance and have the cash set aside by the time the Paying Agent arrives. The disbursing team in general will benefit from a good RIPTOA with the Detachment 4 and their disbursing team. Constant communication with all Agent officers is imperative to successful disbursing Agent officer transactions.

(4) Overall Assessment: P**D. Conduct Commercial Vendor Operations (14-2-8003): P**

Subtasks:

- Maintain a Bills Register Card (805A-44C-1010) P
- Verify Accounts Payable Vouchers (805A-44C-3018) P
- Prepare Routine Vouchers for Payment (805A-APA-8205) P
- Input Accounts Payable Vouchers into CAPS (805A-APA-8214) P

(1) Observations: The Soldiers within the Commercial Vendor Services performed remarkably well throughout the 5 day CERTEX. Each Soldier within the cell demonstrated a thorough understanding of their mission and an extensive knowledge of CVS operations. Led by SGT Guymon, along with SGT Boatright and SGT Payne each contributed to the success of the cell and should continue to improve upon their success. Additionally, the CVS cell grasped the concept of the CVS interface with DDS taught by SFC Fowler (OST staff) and proved to be capable of executing the task in theater. Other tasks performed to standard by the section include: printing of daily reports, inputting DOV numbers into the CAPS-C, establishing user ID's as well as user access in CAPS-C, auditing payments, and manually certifying SF 1034 vouchers for payment. Whether tasked to maintain the bills register card (BRC) or prepare/compute payment, the sections continuously executed to standard. Communications, organization, and attention to detail are three key areas that should continue to be improved in order to establish an environment conducive to success. Positive observations included: proper verification of payment vouchers, good filing and control of all documents, and excellent teamwork within the sections.

(2) Concerns: Some Soldiers working within the CVS cell will be detached from Det 4 368th FMCO and sent to work with the 368th FMCO in Bagram upon arrival in theater. Due to change of environment and newly assigned roles with the 368th FMCO, each Soldier will be challenged to adapt quickly to their new locations. Therefore, unit leadership will be challenged to ensure that the CVS section continued to sustain their cohesive posture as well as improve upon their success.

(3) Recommendations: The CVS cell should continue to improve its communications and working relationship with the Disbursing cell. Additionally, Det 4 368th FMCO leadership must ensure each of their Soldiers being assigned to the 368th FMCO is well informed as far in advance of their roles and expectations while serving in their respective capacity with the 368th FMCO. Constant communication with all leaders involved in the process will be vital to ensure these Soldiers are well prepared, taken care of and ready to undertake their mission.

(4) Overall Assessment: P

C. Conduct Military Pay Operations (No Task Number): P

Subtasks:

- Determine Entitlements to Pay and Allowances (805A-FSC-8103) P
- Interpret an Active Component Military Pay Account (805A-FSC-8105) P
- Interpret a Reserve Component Military Pay Account (805A-FSC-8105) P

(1) Observations: The Military Pay section demonstrated its ability to conduct military pay operations to standard. Led by SSG Albright, the section executed all tasks assigned to their sections and continually progressed throughout the exercise. The section utilized polices and SOP's and regulations extensively to help interpret Master Military Pay Account (MMPA) data. The Soldiers within the section also demonstrated their ability to navigate through DJMS as well as interpret pay inquiries without much hindrance.

The military pay section also demonstrated its knowledge of military pay operations by working together to formulate various briefs (i.e. in processing, ECC, and SDP) and briefing them during the exercise. Overall the section performed well and should continue to improve upon its success.

(2) Concerns: No major concerns to note within the Military Pay Section. The NCO's within the section should continue to improve with more experience and time in theater. Also, leadership should continue emphasizing attention to detail as well as a thorough understanding of military pay policies and SOP's in order to mitigate potential errors within the section.

(3) Recommendations: Utilize Soldiers with extensive military pay experience to train less experienced Soldiers. Continue to groom NCO's in the section and ensure that all SOP's and policies are continually being implemented when coding documents. Open lines of communication, with key leaders from other units will help alleviate major military pay issues by ensuring Mil Per messages and changes to police are communicated and understood. .

(4) Overall Assessment: P

D. CERTEX Overall Assessment: P

(1) Observations: Overall Det 4 368th FMCO performed well during the CERTEX conducted on 17-21 December 2008 at Camp McGregor, Fort Bliss, TX. It was obvious from the onset and throughout the exercise that extensive planning and preparation were conducted by the unit prior to executing the CERTEX. Led by 1LT Ahn and SFC Ngyuen the unit overall did an outstanding job. NCOIC's must continue to seek alternative ways to improve their respective sections without sacrificing the positive gains accomplished thus far. Unit leadership should also, continue preparing a plan for execution upon its arrival in theater. Soldiers within the unit are willing and able to perform financial management operations to standard given the proper tools and guidance from within the chain of command. The unit must continue to brush up on their technical expertise by reviewing theater/finance policies, regulations, and SOP's. Despite not having the "ideal" facilities, the Soldiers within the Detachment demonstrated a resilient attitude and desire to perform well.

(2) Concerns: Attachment of 6 of Det 4 368th Soldiers to the 368th FMCO. With limited resources, and abundance of FMST's, and more Soldiers being deployed to the OEF AOR, the detachment may be tasked to support these and other ongoing operations. With fewer Soldiers than a full detachment size element, this may hinder the success of Det 4 368th. Leadership should look at their mission and determine potential issues with future missions.

(3) Recommendations: **HAVE A PLAN!** Leadership should continue to forecast and plan for future operations. NCO's (especially E-5's) must be challenged and continually groomed to make well and informed decisions. Continue communicating with MAJ Haight and 1LT Benavides and their teams up to and throughout the RIPTOA process. Finally, emplace your best qualified and trained Soldiers in positions that will enable them to execute accordingly and succeed in the Detachment mission.

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SUBJECT: 4 Det 368th Financial Management Company CERTEX Report

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4 Encls

1. Disbursing
2. Agent Ops.
3. CVS
4. Military Pay


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